

The Record

THE BAPTIST

JOURNAL OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION

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Missionary service to be held in Jackson

By William H. Perkins Jr.
Editor

The North American Mission Board (NAMB) of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) will hold what is believed to be the missionary-sending agency's first-ever commissioning service in Mississippi on May 20 at First Church, Jackson.

The service, which will begin in the church's sanctuary at 9:30 a.m., will commission Southern Baptist missionaries assigned to mission fields in the United States, Canada, Puerto Rico, American Samoa, Guam, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and the Northern Mariana Islands — the areas for which NAMB has primary responsibility within the SBC.

"We are excited about hosting the NAMB commissioning service. This is a welcome opportunity to affirm our commitment to Southern Baptist missions in North America," said Frank Pollard, senior pastor at First Church, Jackson.

"Every church has been given the Great Commission. NAMB provided for us an excellent way to give the Gospel to our continent," he added.

Records kept by Bill Graham, who retired last year from the post of director of missionary personnel at NAMB, indicate that Mississippi has not hosted a North American missionary appointment service for at least as far back as 1983, when Graham accepted the post and began to keep the records.

Commissioning service records before 1983 are sketchy, said NAMB spokesman James Dotson, but this service is believed to be the first of its kind in Mississippi.

NAMB is based in Alpharetta, Ga., just outside Atlanta. The agency is the former Home Mission Board (HMB) of the SBC.

"The North American Mission Board exists to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ, start New Testament congregations, minister to persons in the name of Christ, and assist churches in the United States and Canada in effectively performing these functions," according to the mission statement on the NAMB web site, www.namb.net.

NAMB missionary personnel number 5,081, according to information provided by the agency on its web site, with 2,416 endorsements for chaplaincy. The agency also boasts 2,639 Mission Service Corps workers and more than 250,000 volunteer missionaries.

NAMB this year will receive \$40,887,749, in Cooperative Program funds and \$48,451,537 in gifts to the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for North American Missions. Total NAMB income is \$119,580,999.

Among the approximately 36 couples scheduled to be commissioned are Greg and Debby Murphree of Senatobia, who will be serving in Syracuse, New York.

Syracuse, New York.
Greg Murphree is the Anglo Church planting missionary for the Baptist Convention of New York.

He is working to assist churches and associations in planting strong Anglo churches in the largely unreached state of New York.



The agency's vision statement, also available on the web site, reads: "We see a day when every person in every community in the United States and Canada will have the opportunity to hear the Gospel, respond with faith in Christ, and participate in a New Testament fellowship of believers."

at the church, attendees are encouraged to arrive early enough to locate a legal parking space. The Jackson Police Department will ticket and/or tow illegally parked vehicles.

For more information, First Church, Jackson, can be contacted at (601) 949-1900, or www.fbcj.org.

WHAT'S IN THE RECORD

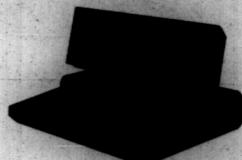
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VOLUME 125 NUMBER 15
(ISSN-0005-5778)

Published weekly except weeks of July 4 and Christmas by the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, 515 Mississippi Street, Jackson, MS 39201. Subscription \$8.35 per year payable in advance. Economy plans available for cooperating Mississippi churches. Periodicals postage paid at Jackson, MS. Member, Association of State Baptist Papers. Deadlines: News items — one calendar week prior to requested publication date. Advertising — two calendar weeks prior to requested publication date.

Al and Rita Ameskamp jumped at the chance to have a movie filmed on their corn farm outside Dyersville, Iowa. It was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity and the result turned out to be Field of Dreams, the endearing 1989 movie that garnered a number of Academy Award nominations.

The movie, you will recall, revolves around Iowa corn farmer Ray Kinsella (Kevin Costner) and his mysterious dream to build a baseball field in the middle of his emerging crop. In the end, Ray's persistence in following his dream affords him the opportunity to right an old wrong and rebuild a long-lost relationship.

When the movie wrapped and all the Hollywood types departed for California, Al Ameskamp set about the task of plowing up the baseball field that had served as the movie's main set and preparing to do what he had done each year for decades — plant his corn crop.

He was in for a big surprise, however. After the movie was released, people who had been deeply moved by the film's powerful reconciliation theme began to show up in Dyersville asking for directions to the Field of Dreams.

As the number of seekers swelled into the thousands, the Ameskamps raced to restore the movie set that meant so much to so many people. Soon the pilgrimages began.

Tourists from as far away as Japan who have seen the movie fly all the way around the world just to glimpse the Field of Dreams. Big, broad-shouldered men come and cry like babies. Fathers bring their fathers and tearfully walk arm-in-arm across the field.

More than twelve years after the film's release, people still flock to the site.

"It's a place where people come to reconcile. It's a little sanctuary," says James Earl Jones, who portrays a character in the motion picture named Terrence Mann.

We are excited to announce the beginning of an annual Vacation Bible School (VBS) Day of Prayer. The 2001 VBS Day of Prayer is set for May 20.

On this Sunday, churches are encouraged to pray for their VBS leaders and children, as well as for the Vacation Bible Schools that will be held around the world this summer. This gives you the opportunity to have a commissioning service for your VBS leadership and to show appreciation for their work.

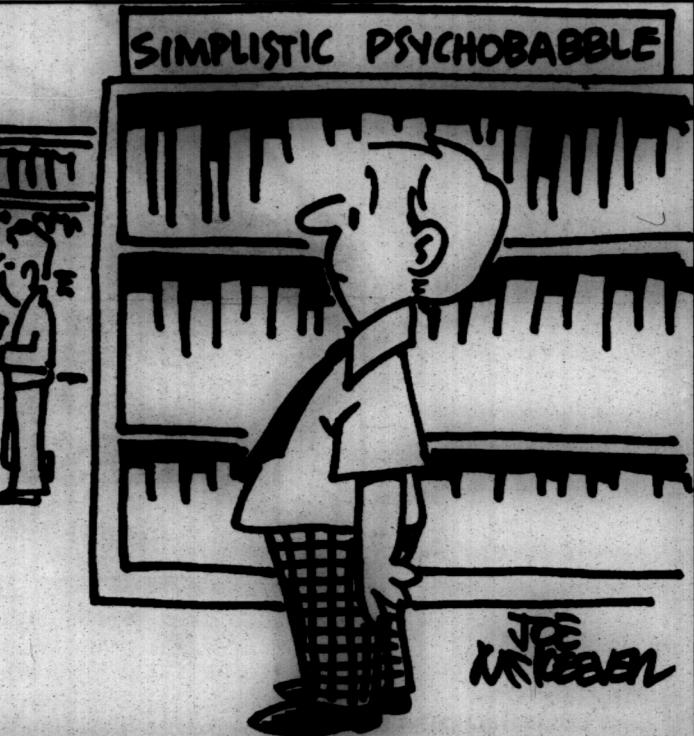
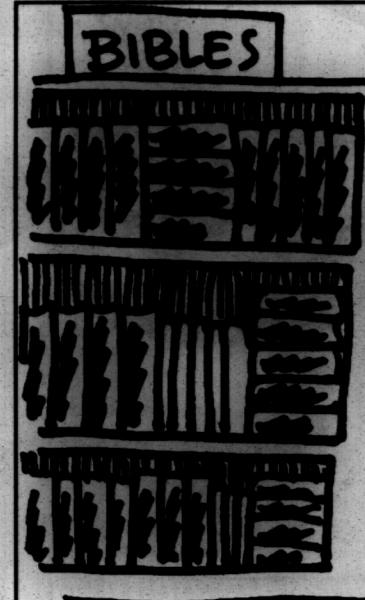
Each week during the summer, LifeWay employees will be praying specifically for individual church VBS programs.

To participate in this prayer effort send the date of your church's VBS to Jerry Vogel at LifeWay by phone at (615) 251-5653, by e-mail to jerry.vogel@lifeway.com, or by regular mail to LifeWay Christian Resources, 127 Ninth Ave., North, Nashville, TN 37234-0172.

Can the children you know say all the Ten Commandments? More importantly, can they tell you what the commandments mean? Most important of all, do the children you know try to live by the Ten Commandments?

After a week of Truth Trackers and the Secret of the Stone Tablets VBS 2001, boys

In search of peace



There is an explanation. The Field of Dreams experience is, in essence, a snapshot of America.

It is a snapshot of the richest, most powerful nation on earth, but yet a nation that yearns to fill its starving soul with something more significant and eternal than materialism and military might.

It is a snapshot of a nation of broken families and broken relationships and broken people who want to believe the mere act of walking across a movie set will somehow slake their parched spirits.

Jones' character Mann foreshadows such real-life conduct in one of the most memorable lines from the movie. As Ray flirts with bankruptcy and foreclosure because of his obsession with the field, Mann suggests that he can charge an admission price for all the people who will be coming.

"For it is money they have, and peace they lack," Mann says.

Truly, what America lacks today is peace — the kind of peace gained only through a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

How will they know such peace, if they don't know Jesus? How will they know Jesus, if we don't tell them?

Sadly, in a country that yearns to know peace — a country that has come to accept school shootings and skyrocketing teen pregnancy and suicide rates as as the norm — there are literally millions of Christians who never shared the peace of Jesus Christ with a single lost person.

Let us daily be about the Savior's business of leading Mississippi and the world to the only true and eternal Field of Dreams.

After what Jesus did for us, can we do any less for him?

GUEST OPINION:

VBS: a flagship community event

*By Linda Reeves, consultant
Sunday School Department, MBCB*

and girls will be better able to do all three. The strategy is to change lives, not just to educate. Bible teaching is still the focus of VBS.

Truth Trackers is an action adventure that takes children and their leaders through the deserts of Egypt and the Middle East on a thrilling expedition in search of the Stone Tablets. The use of the theme should never overshadow the Bible content, but themes do make the week exciting and people are drawn to events that are fun.

Become an active participant in your church's VBS. If you can-

not attend then be a prayer partner. Choose one class and pray for the needs of that class every day. On Thursday pray for the decisions that will be

made. Pray for wisdom for leaders who will be counseling boys and girls in the most important decision in their lives.

How did we do last year? Mississippi reported a total enrollment of 78,296, with 2,340 decisions to accept Christ. There were 13,213 Sunday School prospects discovered and \$134,214.55 was given to missions.

In a special VBS edition of Sunday School Today maga-

zine, pastor Jerry Bingham of Swiftwater Church in Greenville reports, "We saw Vacation Bible School as one of the greatest ministries the church could get involved in."

"The difference came when we saw Vacation Bible School not only for our children but for children of the community where the child and the parents needed Jesus Christ."

Children from Liberty Church, Flowood; First Church, Madison; and Colonial Heights Church, Jackson, were asked questions concerning VBS 2000:

How did VBS help to make me a better person?

- Zach, age 8: made me a Christian.
- Eric, age 11: learn(ed) about missions.
- Melanie, age 8: taught me to teach others to come to church.

What I liked most about Vacation Bible School last year:

- Jordan, age 11: all the different activities.

• Alex, age 8: It was fun!

I love to hear the voices of children, some laughing, some loud, some soft — voices that need to be heard this summer in Vacation Bible School. Help make VBS the flagship event for evangelism and outreach in your community.

Pray for the harvest.

Panel cites countries for religious concerns

WASHINGTON (BP) — The United States Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) issued its second annual report April 30, broadening its policy recommendations to cover 10 countries in which religious freedom is at risk, according to Internet news service Newsroomonline.com.

USCIRF addresses its recommendations to Congress and the executive branch as required by the 1998 International Religious Freedom Act. Among its 2001 policy proposals, the commission advocated all companies doing business in "countries of particular concern," as designated under the '98 act, be required to disclose the nature of their business before being allowed to glean investment from U.S. capital markets.

Along with Sudan, the nations currently identified by the State Department as countries of particular concern are Afghanistan, Burma, China, Iran, Iraq, and Serbia.

Highlights from the report's recommendations include:

- China: The report notes a crackdown on unregistered religious groups over the last year and a tightening of restrictions on official religions.

Among its recommendations, USCIRF urged the U.S. government to use its influence in the world to prevent China from being selected as a site for the Olympic Games until sustained religious freedom and

human rights improvements have been demonstrated.

- India: While a democratic country, India has experienced an increase in violence against religious minorities.

remove all outside militia forces Muslim and Christian; pursue a reconciliation program; and ensure perpetrators of violence are brought to justice.

- Iran: The report notes unofficial and evangelistic minority religious groups suffer particularly acute official discrimination, the most vulnerable group being the Bahai community.

USCIRF recommends the president or secretary of state reaffirm in its dialogue with Iran that human rights and religious freedom improvements are a prerequisite for a normalization of relations with the United States, including a complete lifting of current sanctions.

- North Korea: Though it is difficult to gain reliable information on this country, the report states, religious freedom in North Korea is "non-existent." The United States should stress that normalization of relations and the complete lifting of sanctions are tied to human rights and religious freedom improvements, USCIRF argues.

- Nigeria: As several northern states move to expand the implementation of Sharia (Islamic law), tension between Muslims and Christians continues to increase.

USCIRF urges the administration to promote religious freedom in diplomatic discussions and to encourage the Nigerian government to monitor the application of Sharia-based criminal law in the north.

- Pakistan: The report argues that Pakistan is not doing enough to ensure religious freedom for minority groups.

The United States should urge the Pakistani government to take procedural steps toward curtailing the abuse of blasphemous

my laws and should take the position that separate electoral systems for minority groups clash with basic democratic principles.

- Russia: The government of Russia has yet to speak concerning its decision not to extend the deadline for the registration of religious groups as required by a 1997 law.

Meanwhile, some 1,500 religious groups face potential "liquidation" by the government, according to the USCIRF report.

The U.S. government should monitor religious freedom issues in Russia and raise them at the highest diplomatic levels, the report recommends.

- Sudan: In the midst of an 18-year civil war, Sudan's Islamic regime continues to

Religious freedom watchlist

CHINA
INDIA
INDONESIA
IRAN
NORTH KOREA
NIGERIA
PAKISTAN
RUSSIA
SUDAN
VIETNAM

Source: USCIRF

Indonesians await ruling

LONDON (BP) — Indonesia's notorious "persecution" case has reached the desk of President Abdurrahman Wahid, with a decision expected soon, according to the international news service Compass Direct. Elsewhere in Southeast Asia, recent Christian-Muslim developments include the release of two Christians on Ambon island and death sentences being imposed on two Christian evangelists for allegedly insulting Islam. Pending before President Wahid is the case of two Christians — three men and three women — from Padang, West Sumatra, who were tried and convicted of abducting and forcibly converting a teenage Muslim girl in mid-1999.

The six were given jail sentences of between six and 10 years each. Yet the evidence was "extremely dubious," as described by Compass Direct, and many suspect local Muslim extremists of mounting an elaborate "sing operation." The sentences were upheld in appeals that extended to the nation's supreme court. As a last resort, the case has been referred to President Wahid, who has the power to issue pardons to the six. Human rights organizations condemned the verdicts, and local Christians maintained the girl was "planned" to stir up trouble, Compass Direct reported. Many Christians are hopeful that Wahid — a staunch defender of religious pluralism and backed by Muslim extremists — will free the six. The three men have already served most of a year in prison, but the women have not yet been sentenced.

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FRONT PAGE

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Record

PUBLISHED SINCE 1877

MAY 17, 2001

VOL. 125

No. 15

inflict widespread human rights abuses, including the bombing of civilian targets, the report asserts.

The president should appoint a high-profile special envoy to Sudan, and foreign companies investing in Sudan's oil and gas development should be closed out of U.S. capital markets.

- Vietnam: "Despite a marked increase in religious practice among the Vietnamese people in the last 10 years, the Vietnamese government continues to suppress organized religious activities forcefully and to monitor and control religious communities," the USCIRF report notes.

The commission suggested that congressional consideration of a bilateral trade agreement with Vietnam be linked to "religious freedom factors;" otherwise, "it may be interpreted by the government of Vietnam as a signal of American indifference."

Looking back

10 years ago

Saying he plans to attend the June 4-6 Southern Baptist Convention meeting as an elected messenger, Daniel Vestal steadfastly denies that formation of the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship (CBF) constitutes a new convention even though more than 5,000 attended the CBF annual meeting.

20 years ago

Students at Southern Seminary in Louisville, Ky., organize a bloc they hope will wield major influence on the upcoming proceedings at the Southern Baptist Convention in Los Angeles. The bloc isn't about politics, however, as students plan 48 hours of prayer at specific times during the convention.

50 years ago

First Church, Tylertown, holds the first services in its newly completed edifice on May 13. Built and equipped for approximately \$120,000, the beautiful air-conditioned sanctuary and commodious education building will each accommodate 700 persons.

Webster Baptists thriving on food ministry

By Tim Nicholas
Staff Writer

Webster County Baptists can feed a family of 405 for \$90.80 per month.

That's the December 2000 statistic from Webster Association's food ministry. That \$90.80 bought 2,348 pounds of food for 405 clients in 202 families.

According to James Bryant, missions director for the Eupora-based association, the ministry can provide food for distribution to needy people at a nominal cost through the Mississippi Food Network.

The association buys the food out of its budget and from the \$125 per month the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board is providing this year through its Associational Missions Response Fund.

The fund aids special projects for associations throughout the state of Mississippi.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture provides the bulk of the food to the Food Network, which also receives donations from grocery chains and others. The Webster ministry is not allowed to sell any food and

clients must meet county residency and income requirements.

Although the ministry is not allowed to evangelize clients directly, each new client is given a New Testament. Volunteers

often engage clients in spiritually-related conversation.

"Sometime in the distant past, the church let go of a part of its ministry in taking care of the needs of the people of the community and allowed the government to assume the responsibility," said Bryant. "This gives us the opportunity to take back a part of that responsibility."

Walker Satterwhite, operation manager for the Mississippi Food Network, said that 350 agencies including the Webster County ministry participate in the Food Network. Agencies range from homeless shelters to pantries and group homes.

"About 50 percent of our agencies are churches," he said.

The Webster ministry operates with volunteers and two co-directors: Harvey Kolb and Jimmy Rogers.

"We can love people and let them know our desire to help them is out of love," Kolb said.



FEEDING THE HUNGRY — Volunteers for the Webster Association food pantry project include (from left) Sachiyo Donohoo, Alice Shaw, Jimmy R. Caffey, and Harvey Kolb, all of Walthall Church, Walthall; Bennie Lewis of Stewart Church, Stewart; and Tommie S. Alden of Walthall Church. (Photo by Tim Nicholas)

PRAY FOR VBS

Throughout all of our churches, May 20 will be a special day of prayer for Vacation Bible School (VBS).

I want to encourage everyone to take just a moment to focus on VBS and have a special time of prayer — maybe in your Sunday School opening assembly, or in your Sunday School class — where you pray just for VBS. Also, during the worship service, pray for VBS.

Everyone can pray for the work God will do in the lives of thousands of boys and girls across America during VBS. Not everyone can work in VBS, but everyone *can* pray! Not everyone can be present to share in the celebrations, sing the songs, learn the verses, enjoy the stories, but everyone *can* pray!

VBS is more than just a children's summer activity session at the church. It is, without question, one of the most effective evangelistic tools that Southern Baptists have ever been given. VBS made a difference in my life.

I learned the Ten Commandments in VBS. I will never forget when I was in an Old Testament Class in seminary, the teacher came in one day and began with a pop test. The test consisted of one question: name the Ten Commandments, listing them in order. My mind went back to a little Sunday School room where a VBS teacher encouraged, or maybe even commanded, that we learn the Ten Commandments and she led us to do so.

In this seminary class of future preachers, only a small handful could list the Ten Commandments in order. At that moment, I gave thanks in



Directions

Jim Futral, executive director-treasurer
Mississippi Baptist Convention Board

my heart to God for a VBS teacher who enabled me to make 100 on a pop test. I not only learned the Ten Commandments, but I learned the books of the Bible in VBS — sixty-six books!

I can remember it as though it happened last week — VBS beginning at Highland Church, Jackson. My teacher, Mrs. Chapman, challenged the entire class to learn (memorize) all of the books of the Bible. I was in elementary school and, along with a number of other boys in the class, was fairly confident that we *could not* learn all those books in one week but, you know, we did! Joyfully and with a great sense of accomplishment, we learned them, and the road map to finding Scripture was forever planted in my heart.

I am grateful for VBS, and of all the things that I remember best is the year I heard the Gospel of Jesus as I had never heard it before! Back then, we would oftentimes have a week of VBS followed by a week of revival. On Friday of VBS, my teacher shared the plan of salvation. She told us how Jesus came and died for our sins and that if we would but turn from our sins and trust him, we could be saved. I know that I had heard it many times before, but I remember, to this day, truly listening that day!

I did not accept Jesus as my Savior that Friday during VBS, but the seed was planted that continued to grow over Saturday and Sunday, and then on Sunday night, at the beginning of the revival, it was just as though Jesus was talking directly and plainly to me!

When we began to sing the invitation, the work of the Holy Spirit, in applying God's Word to my heart, pulled me to the cross. That night, two days after VBS and day one of the revival, I invited Jesus into my heart. I experienced then what I know now to be a glorious and incredible fact: VBS is a spiritual experience and a wonderful instrument in the hands of God to reach boys and girls for Jesus!

Is it worth having VBS each summer — what with all the work, preparation, recruitment, planning, praying, and then implementing? Absolutely!

Let all of us join together in the great network of prayer and ask that the Lord Almighty bless the VBS efforts across this land.

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'High-tech gleaning' to help world hunger

RICHMOND, Va. (BP) — Southern Baptists can get closer to God by ministering to people in need in even the smallest ways, a Southern Baptist hunger expert says.

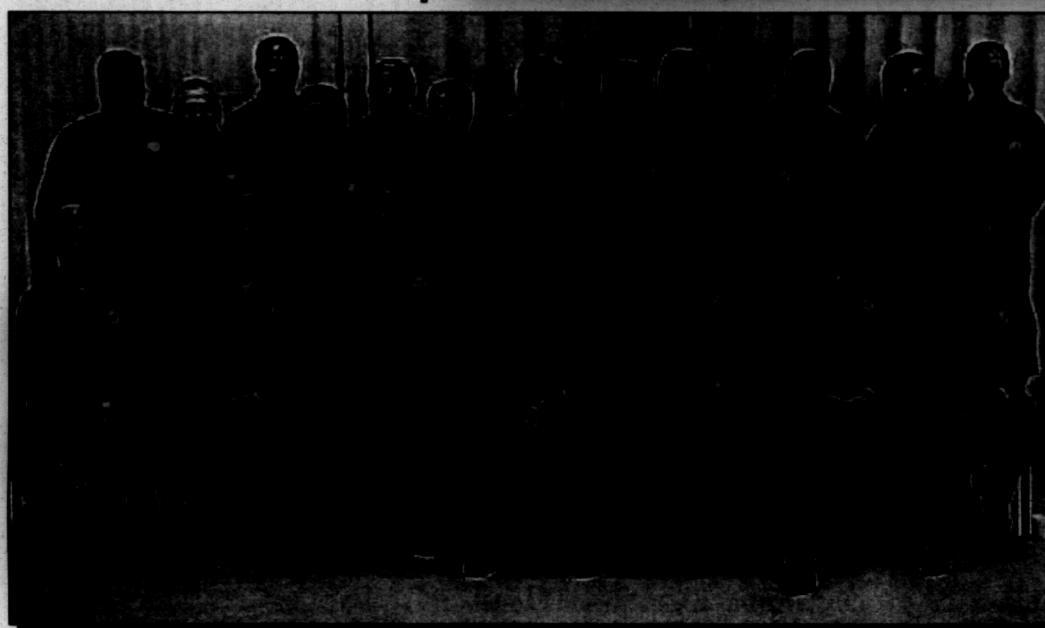
"God cares about people in



HUNGRY SOULS — Many people live in countries where access to the Gospel is restricted. Hunger relief projects, like this one in Madagascar, create opportunities to share God's love with hungry souls. (Photo by Roy M. Burroughs)

"That's not a lot of money, but it is a lot of people," he said.

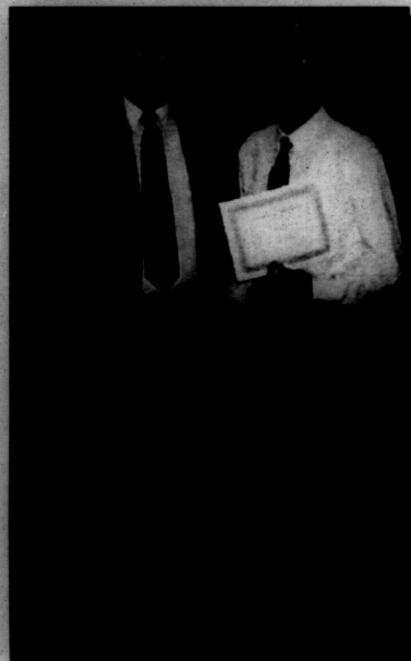
JUST FOR THE RECORD



Mississippi Singing Churchmen mission team

Twenty-two members of the Mississippi Singing Churchmen will be participating in mission work in the Odessa Oblast region of Ukraine, May 24-June 5. Jim Futral, executive secretary-treasurer of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, will be a part of this team. The team will share and work in churches, music schools, concert halls, and local evangelistic efforts. They will also have the opportunity to be a part of graduation exercises at the seminary in Odessa.

Banner Church, Calhoun Association, recognized Bill McGuire (right) for 75 years of faithful service to the church. Rex Ard, pastor, presented him a certificate of appreciation.



Ard and McGuire



ALL SIZES
SALES AND RENTALS

New Spirit will be in concert at Central Church, Meridian, May 19 at 7 p.m. Call the church at (601) 693-4288 for additional information.

Gallman Church, Copiah Association, will dedicate its new Christian Activities Center on May 20. Robert Armstrong of Pontotoc, former member, will bring the morning message and

Johnny Johns, former member, will lead the music. A covered dish luncheon will be served in the new building following the morning worship service and the dedication service will begin at 2 p.m. Harold McLendon is pastor.

Como Church, Como, will celebrate its 115th anniversary, June 3-5. Sunday, 11 a.m., noon meal, and 5 p.m.; Monday and Tuesday, 7 p.m. Paul Smith of Eufaula,

Bible Drillers at New Life Church, McLain, (pictured, front row) are Tracey Pugh, leader; (children) Brittany Havard, Whitney Penton, Korey Williams, guest speaker. Andy Christopher Cochran; (back row, youth) Bridgett Hillman, Candace Burch, Terry Brasher, pastor. Ann Breland.

Gospel singing will be held at Ruth Church, Ruth, on May 19, starting at 6 p.m. Singers are Lee Alexander, The Davis Family, Joe McKenzie, Mary Cox McCain, Second Generation, and Johnny Watts. A silent auction will also be held. Proceeds will be for a youth trip to Jackson, Tenn., for Centrifuge.

Caledonia Church, Caledonia, donated two Vacation Bible School offerings to Golden Triangle Association's new church starts fund named in memory of Walter Frederick, former pastor in West Point. Pictured (from left) are Mike Smith, pastor of Caledonia

Smith and Duncan

Church and Bill Duncan, missions director, Golden Triangle Association.



VBS date

Temple, Myrtle: June 18-22; 6:30-9 p.m.

Causeyville, Meridian: May 20; Sunday School, 9:45 a.m.; worship, 11 a.m., followed by covered dish lunch; and Buddy McElroy and Singing Saints, guest for afternoon song service; Bill Webb, guest speaker; Ernest Allen, pastor.

Thorn Hill, Pelahatchie: May 27; Sunday School, 10 a.m.; worship service, 11 a.m.; dinner on the grounds at noon; Travelers Quartet singing at 1:30 p.m.

Roundaway, Doddsville: May 27; Memorial Day services; Sunday School, 9:45 a.m.;

HOMECOMINGS

worship, 10:45 a.m.; dinner on the grounds at noon; concert by The Reel Family, 1:30 p.m.; Eddie Donahoe Jr., special guest; Gayden Harrell, pastor.

Bellevue, Thaxton: May 20; 11 a.m.; fellowship meal at noon and singing in the afternoon; M. L. Swinney, guest speaker; Lamar Pickens, pastor.

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ALL SIZES
SALES AND RENTALS

What I tell you in the darkness, speak in the light; and what you hear whispered in your ear, proclaim upon the

HOUSE TOPS.

Matthew 10:27 NAS

May 17, 2001

HouseTops is a Baptist Record supplement produced by the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board's Office of Communication.

2001 Family Week

Gulfshore Baptist Assembly, July 2-6, 2001

Conferences:

- Preschool/Children's TeamKIDS
- Mini-Centrifuge with *Mickey and Alice Little, Mobile*
- Couples - *Ronnie and Beverly Cottingham, Lucedale*
- Single Parenting *James Hayes, FBC, Biloxi*
- Transformational Hearts *Eugene Dobbs, Philadelphia, Miss.*



Hilton Family Singers

For every three paying families, spouse of church or association leader gets in free.

For more information contact the Discipleship and Family Ministry Department 1-800-748-1651 or 601-968-3800

Registration For Family Week

Name of Adults _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Children's names/birthdays _____

Church _____

Association _____

Mail to: Gulfshore Baptist Assembly, 100 First Street, Pass Christian, MS 39571 (Visa and MasterCard are accepted.) For more info call 228-452-7261. Make checks payable to Gulfshore Baptist Assembly. (Note: no skateboards or roller-blades)

Deposit: \$40 per person or \$80 per family

COST PER PERSON - ROOM/MEALS/RESERVATIONS

"A" Unit

Adults (12 years and up).....	\$165.40 each
Child (2-11 years old)	\$82.45 each
Under 2 years old	\$4.00 each

"C" Unit

Adults (12 years and up).....	\$150.20 each
Child (2-11 years old)	\$80.50 each
Under 2 years old	\$46.25 each

EAT More Soup



Baptist Friendship House Soup Label Project

New Orleans

Kay Bennett, Director

The BFH ministers to homeless women and children through meeting their basic needs and sharing the gospel. Recently they started a Christian Women's Job Corps and Transitional Housing Program. You can help provide computers for this new ministry by **SAVING CAMPBELL'S SOUP LABELS**.

Call the Miss. WMU to find out how you can participate.

In the Jackson area, 968-3800 or statewide, 1-800-748-1651.

BAPTIST HYMNALS NEEDED FOR AFRICAN SEMINARY

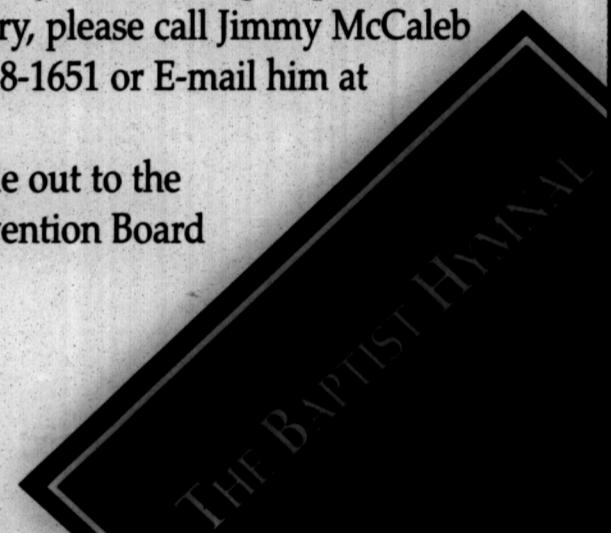
The only seminary in Africa offering a graduate degree in church music is in Ogbomosho, Nigeria. Currently most African church choirs sing only the melody of hymns from memory, for they have only the words without music.

Jimmy McCaleb, Church Music Department consultant, after teaching a course at this seminary, has a burden to provide our fellow Baptist musicians in Africa with copies of the 1991 Baptist Hymnal. Their choirs could then proclaim the theology of our Baptist faith in beautiful four-part harmony!

You can help with a financial gift. One hymnal is \$5. A box of 20 is \$100. If you or your church group would like to participate in this ministry, please call Jimmy McCaleb at 601-292-3273, 1-800-748-1651 or E-mail him at jmccaleb@mbcb.org.

Checks may be made out to the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board and mailed to:

Jimmy McCaleb
MBCB
P.O. Box 530
Jackson, MS 39205



SUPER SUMMER 2001

Barry St. Clair Jake Gullledge

July 16-20
Mississippi College & FBC, Clinton

Super Summer Mississippi is for the student who is a mature and responsible leader and is growing in his or her relationship to Christ. Students attending Super Summer spend approximately 20 hours in discipleship and evangelism training. Students are led in this training by youth leaders from across the state. They are also challenged and equipped to utilize their talents to penetrate their culture for Christ in a creative and effective way. Throughout Super Summer, students are encouraged to use the freedom they have in Christ to change their world. Don't miss out on an opportunity to be part of Super Summer 2001. This year's camp is July 16-20 and is held at Mississippi College and FBC, Clinton.

For more info, contact the Discipleship and Family Ministry Department
1-800-748-1651 or 601-968-3800

MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST YOUTH NIGHT 2001

Mississippi Coliseum, Jackson
Friday, July 27, 6:30-9:00 p.m.



Rick Dusley
Speaker



Michael John Clement
Worship Leader

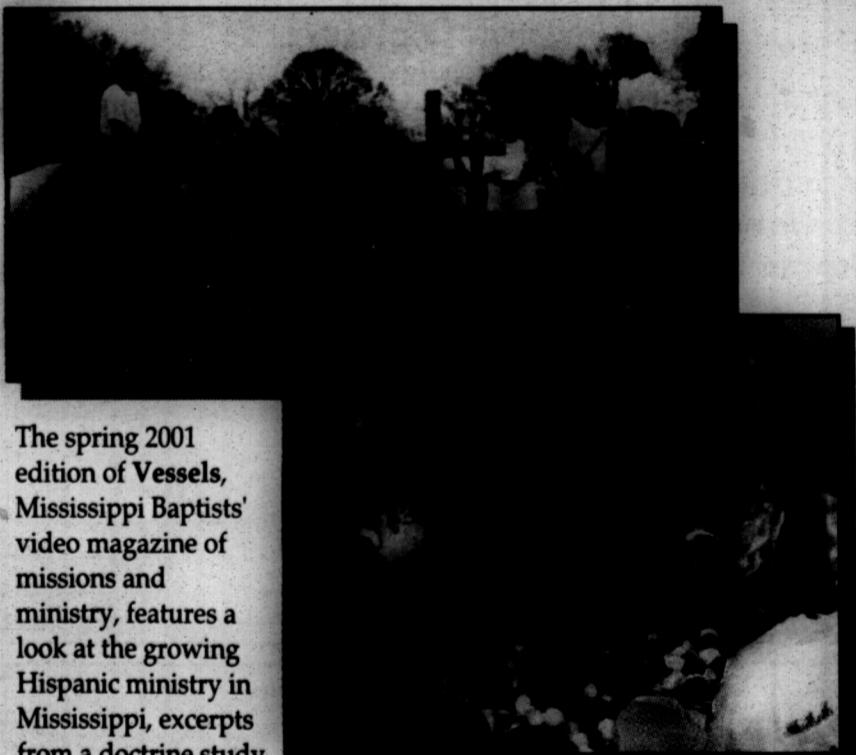
GUIDELINES

- Encourage your youth to bring their Bibles and jackets to night.
- Encourage each person to bring a Bible.
- Appropriate dress is requested.
- No alcohol, beverages, tobacco products, or illegal drugs will be permitted.
- No radios or recording equipment will be permitted.
- Cell phones may be used at 6:25 p.m.

Mississippi Baptist Youth Night's purpose is to provide the youth of Mississippi the opportunity to gather for a contemporary worship celebration led by creative communicators of the gospel resulting in edifying believers and reaching others for Christ.

PLAN NOW TO BRING YOUR CHURCH YOUTH GROUP

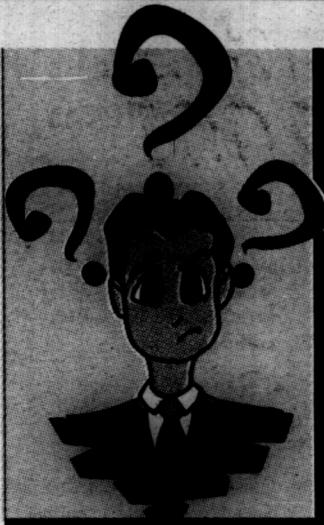
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The spring 2001 edition of Vessels, Mississippi Baptists' video magazine of missions and ministry, features a look at the growing Hispanic ministry in Mississippi, excerpts from a doctrine study

on grace, a visit to Boston where more than 200 students spent their spring break in ministry, and Crosswalk. Crosswalk was a year-long project for Mississippi Acteens who carried a six-foot cross while they performed ministries across the state. Top picture: Acteens hand off the cross from Gulf Coast Association to Pearl River Association. At left, riding Red, is Tiffany Smith, 17, of Bethel Church, Pearl River County. At right, riding Apache, is Brittany Breland, 15, of First Church, Wiggins. Bottom picture: Acteens prepare Easter baskets for Jackson-area kids during their March convention in Clinton.

Call the Broadcast Services Department, Mississippi Baptist Convention Board at 1-800-748-1651, to arrange for a showing. (Tim Nicholas photos)



*Ever had this thought?
"If I could just do a few things to
make my Sunday School better..."
Then Super Saturday is for you!*

Super Saturday

We can all benefit from a few really good ideas.

Sunday School's Ten Best Practices will help any Sunday School worker, in any size church, to get a grasp of what Sunday School could, and should, be.

The Mississippi Baptist Sunday School Department, in cooperation with LifeWay Christian Resources, is pleased to offer three regional Super Saturday events to train all Sunday School leadership, Sunday School directors, as well as all pastors and staff members to make the best of their Sunday School.

CHOOSE FROM ONE OF THREE CONVENIENT LOCATIONS:

Saturday, August 25, 9 a.m.-noon

- First Baptist Church, Grenada
- Main Street Baptist Church, Hattiesburg

Saturday, September 8, 9 a.m.-noon

- Poplar Springs Drive Baptist Church, Meridian

Cost: \$2 per person, which covers all conference materials as well as a copy of the book, "Beyond the Walls: Ten Best Practices."

Conference leaders will be special Sunday School equippers from the Mississippi Baptist Convention as well as LifeWay Conference leaders.

Leadership Conferences Offered For:

Younger Preschool
Younger Children
Older Children
Older Youth
Median Adults
General Officers

Older Preschool
Middle Children
Younger Youth
Young Adults
Senior Adults
Pastor/Staff

Pre-Registration Form
Pre-registration deadline is August 1, 2001.
Super Saturday
Sunday School Department

Mark which location you will attend:

Grenada Meridian Hattiesburg

Individual Registration

Name _____ Daytime Phone _____

Address _____

City _____ St _____ Zip _____

Church Registration

Church Name _____

Address _____

City _____ St _____ Zip _____

Contact Person _____

Contact Person's Daytime Phone _____

Total Reservations _____

Complete this section for both individual registration and church registration.

Place the number of people you will have attending in each blank in front of the age group conference they will attend.

Younger Preschool

Older Preschool

Younger Children

Middle Children

Older Children

Younger Youth

Older Youth

Young Adults

Median Adults

Senior Adults

General Officers

Pastor/Staff

Total number to attend from my church _____

Cost is \$2 per person, which covers all conference materials as well as a copy of the book, "Beyond the Walls: Ten Best Practices."

Check for \$ _____ (\$2 per person) made out to Mississippi Baptist Convention Board is enclosed with my pre-registration form.

Complete and mail by August 1 to:
Sunday School Department, PO Box 530, Jackson MS 39205

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For more information:
Discipleship and Family Ministry Department
MBCB
1-800-748-1651 or 968-3800 (in Jackson)

Pray this day for...

May 18 - June 7, 2001

Prayer Ministry Office • P.O. Box 530 • Jackson, MS 39205-0530 • Phone 601-292-3304 • Mississippi PrayerLine 1-800-787-7729 (PRAY)

"God delights in the trust that we show when we pray."

Jayant S. Trajker, Gujarat, India (The Upper Room)

For: (1) Associational Emphasis Week, 20th-27th (MSNXT); (2) Pray for Stewart Pickle, church planter strategist in Manassas, Va., New Community BC in Stafford and their pastor David Lewis. Pray for two Hispanic church starts and a Chinese survey team.

Due to the isolation of the believers in Tiquanero, Ecuador, a town that can be reached only by a long canoe trip and a hike over rough country, the training of leaders is very difficult. Pray for K., the new believer who leads the group of Christians in Tiquanero.

As in all of China, students in the city of Lin-yi receive Marxist indoctrination and have been told all their lives that there is no God. Pray that God will open up the minds of the people and that they will have the courage to trust Jesus. Ask God to raise up Christian leaders among them.

For: (1) New Church Start Update, Scott Assn. Center, Forest (SM); (2) III Senior Adult Conference, 21st-25th, Gulfshore Assembly (D&FM).

21

For: (1) Memorial Day, (2) I Youth Conference, May 28-June 1, Gulfshore Assembly (MBCB); (3) Ricky Milford in Talladega, Ala., is a church planter missionary for the deaf in the Crystal River Baptist Association and pastor of Faith Baptist Deaf Church. Pray for more deaf men to be trained as pastors.

For: (1) GA Summer Camp, 4th-8th, Camp Garawa (WMU); (2) Pray for many people of Taiwan who believe their well-being is dependent on the approval of Matsu and other gods. Pray that the message of the true God will begin and take hold throughout Taiwan.

In a couple of the new churches-in-formation in the Saenz Pena area of Northern Argentina, unforgiveness and a grudgeful spirit are inhibiting the progress of the churches. Pray that the Lord would soften their hearts, give them a forgiving spirit, and give them eyes to see their part.

A worker in a Last Frontier country writes: "A local pastor tells us that some of the new believers were pressured by nonbelievers into identifying who it was who brought them to Christ. So the team members have been identified. Pray for safety and protection for all involved."

For: (1) III Youth Conference, 5th-9th, Gulfshore Assembly (MBCB) (2) Please pray today for Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina Wajed of Bangladesh.

Pray for the training of national workers in Indonesia. Many new opportunities are developing in cross-cultural communication and evangelism. Pray for the safety of the participants and leaders, from those who would like to discover these programs and put a stop to their work.

Baptist representatives, Tim and Elise Bissell, ask you to pray that God will provide a church planter for the 116,000 Tatar people of Ulyanovsk, Russia. There are only two known Christian Tatars in Ulyanovsk. Pray for these people.

For: (1) Baptist Building AT HOME DAYS, 6th-8th; (2) For relief work for the victims of the January earthquake in India. Pray for construction teams of volunteers to help rebuild their physical shelters while demonstrating the spiritual shelter that Christ provides for all eternity.

For: (1) Mississippi Churchmen Ukraine Mission Trip, May 24-June 5 (CM); (2) Praise God for calling several new people to minister in a Last Frontier country! Pray for their intense adjustment period. Pray for ears to hear and tongues that will be able to reproduce the sounds of their new language.

Pray for a stateside medical volunteer team planning to work with missionaries Terry and Delena Jones in Maswa, Tanzania, in June. The Tanzanian government has strict requirements for health personnel, so it will be a challenge to meet all of them before the team arrives.

There are thousands of Isaan taxi drivers in Bangkok. The Far East Broadcasting Company has prepared special Gospel tapes in the Isaan dialect to distribute to these taxi drivers. Ask for God's blessing on this free distribution to the Isaan cab drivers and that they would play them for their passengers.

For: (1) International Family Discipling Weekend, Central Hills Retreat, 18th-19th (D&FM); (2) Associational Leadership Training, Camp Garawa, 18th-19th (WMU)

18

For: (1) New Church Start Update, Golden Triangle Assn. Center, Columbus, 7-9 p.m. (Strategic Missions); (2) Pray today for Prime Minister Lester Bryant Bird of Antigua (eastern Caribbean Sea).

19

For: (1) Single Adult Conference, 26th-28th, Gulfshore Assembly (D&FM); (2) Pray that the Lord of the harvest will provide laborers to follow-up those individuals who indicated an interest in hearing more about God's love during the prayerwalking Scripture distribution in Taiwan.

For: (1) New Church Start Update, Lamar Assn. Center, Purvis, 7-9 p.m. (SM); (2) For missionaries Vic and Sharon Johnston as they help alleviate the poverty and difficult conditions of their city in Brazil where it is difficult to meet the legal requirements for doing this.

1-98 MR. BRADLEY CURTIS
B.P. 130, Tenkodogo, BURKINA FASO
Parents: Clifton & Cathy, Agriculture
SERVE IN WEST AFRICA

2-83 MISS ALAINA BAKER
Apartado 61-74
Guadalajara Jalisco 44360, MEXICO
Parents: Kenneth & Lynn, Dentistry
SERVE IN WESTERN EUROPE

3-85 MISS HEATHER BROWN
P O Box 30018, Chichiri, Blantyre 3, MALAWI
Parents: John & Claudia, General Evangelism
SERVE IN SOUTHERN AFRICA

4-83 MISS TABITHA FOX
M Vujnovica 1, 10410 Velika Gorica, CROATIA
Parents: Thomas & Tammy, General Evangelism
SERVE IN CENTRAL & EASTERN EUROPE

11-87 MISS ANDREA HENDRICKS
Apartado Postal 969-B, Colonia Zaragoza C P 91910
Vera Cruz Ver, MEXICO
Parents: Larry & Mary, General Evangelism
SERVE IN MIDDLE AMERICA

11-83 MR. BENJAMIN L. JONES
4, Bis Grande Rue, 54420 Saulxures-les-Nancy, FRANCE
Parents: Michael & Pamela, Church Planting
SERVE IN WESTERN EUROPE

13-89 MR. JOSHUA BROWN
P O Box 30018, Chichiri, Blantyre 3, MALAWI
Parents: John & Claudia, General Evangelism
SERVE IN SOUTHERN AFRICA

Take a moment to send a card to encourage the children of our missionaries!



13-85 MISS RACHEL L. GRAVES
Casilla 1417, Concepcion, CHILE
Parents: Edgar & Marilyn, General Evangelism
SERVE IN WESTERN SOUTH AMERICA

17-99 MR. JOSHUA HARBIN
Rua Carlos Von Koseritz, 1211, Apt. 502, Higienopolis,
90540-031 Porto Alegre, RS, BRAZIL
Parents: Christopher & Karen
SERVE IN EASTERN SOUTH AMERICA

20-87 MR. ANDREW BAILEY
506 S West Street, Ripley, MS 38663
Parents: Alvin & Elizabeth, Music Ministry
SERVE IN MIDDLE AMERICA

20-93 MR. CHRISTOPHER CURTIS
B.P. 130, Tenkodogo, BURKINA FASO
Parents: Clifton & Cathy, Agriculture
SERVE IN WEST AFRICA

26-78 MR. VINCENT JOHNSTON
c/o Rev. & Mrs. Joe Blackwell, 192 Mesa-Walkers Bridge Rd.
Tylertown, MS 39067
Parents: Vincent & Sharon, Conference/Encampment
SERVE IN EASTERN SOUTH AMERICA

28-97 MR. JACOB BUSH
B.P. 15, Kenieba, MALI
Parents: Karl & Lena, Community Outreach
SERVE IN WEST AFRICA

30-80 MR. NATHAN COLLINS
9707 SW 57th Street, Cooper City, FL 33328-5729
Parents: Charles & Suzanne, Business Management
SERVE IN THE CARIBBEAN BASIN

30-82 MISS ASHLEY PEVEY
William Carey College, P.O. Box 922, 498 Tuscan Ave.
Hattiesburg, MS 39401-5499
Parents: Frank & Jerry Anne, Richmond Associate
SERVE IN EASTERN AFRICA

NAMES IN THE NEWS



Smith, Derrick, Traxler, and Parkman

New Goodhope Church, Pulaski, ordained Randy Derrick, Bill Traxler, and Louie Parkman as deacons on April 22. Pictured (from left) are Shirl Smith, interim pastor; Derrick; Traxler; and Parkman.

Ruby Nell Moss Young, a member of Becker Church, Becker, and secretary for Monroe Association for 17 years, died April 2 after a short illness. Survivors include her husband Jerry Young; son, Patrick of Amory;

Liberty Hill Church celebrates 150th anniversary



Liberty Hill Church, Panola Association (file photo)

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Liberty Hill Church, Panola Association, will celebrate its 150th anniversary on June 3. Sunday School will begin at 9:30 a.m. and worship at 10:30 a.m. Charles Stubblefield, a former pastor, will preach. Lunch will be provided by the church. Al Mullan is interim pastor.

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mother, Ruby R. Moss of Amory; brother, Ira Moss Jr. of Hattiesburg; sister, Kay M. Burns of Ozark, Ala.; and two grandchildren.

Oakvale Church, Lawrence County, licensed Waygon Sanders to the ministry on May 6. Randy Gardner is pastor.

Pleasant Hill Church, Quitman, announces the ministry of Kevin Ivy. He is serving as the staff evangelist, and will lead a one-day revival at

Pleasant Hill on May 6. Services will be at 11 a.m. and 6 p.m. Ivy is available for revivals, youth revivals, music concerts, and Bible conferences. He can be contacted at (601) 776-1234 (home) or (601) 776-3371 (church); E-mail: Kevin@netpathway.com.



Ivy



Jerry Sanford was recently honored at First Church, Sardis, for 10 years of service. Sanford is pictured (back row) with his wife Glenda and son Daniel; (front row, from left) Ernest "Lit" Scruggs, mayor; Jim Didlake, Mississippi Baptist Convention Board; and James Appleton, deacon.

National Day of Prayer



Frank Pollard, pastor of First Church, Sardis, offers a prayer for repentance of sin and reconciliation at the Mississippi National Day of Prayer May 3. Pollard joined Gov. Haley Barbour, Lt. Gov. Tate Reeves, other state leaders, and many others in the capital for the event. (Photo by Bruce Newman)

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Interest grows in Experiencing God musical

Staff changes

Flowood Church, Brandon, has called **Danny Brock** as minister of worship and ministries, effective May 1. Brock has served the church as bivocational minister of music for over five years.

Strong Hope Church, Wesson, has called **David Crowe** as pastor effective March 15. A native of Baton Rouge, La., Crowe received his education at Louisiana Tech University, New Orleans Seminary, and Luther Rice Seminary. Crowe recently served as pastor at Siloam Church, Franklin Association.



Brock

Crowe

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) — One year after the premiere of "Experiencing God... The Musical," approximately 100,000 copies of the choral book have been ordered, it has received a Dove Award nomination, and reports of its use in worship services continue to include significant spiritual results.

Hundreds of church musicians and worship leaders heard the first public presentation on April 26, 2000, at MusiCalifornia, an annual music conference in San Diego, and many of them returned to their churches convinced the musical message of Experiencing God would make a difference in their congregations.

Among those who were moved to action by the premiere is Joe Crider, minister of music at Second Church, Springfield, Mo. The following month the Second Church musicians began rehearsals, and in September the adult choir and orchestra led in worship with the musical.

Crider recounted, "170 members of our choir sang with our orchestra, and more than 2,300 people packed in our worship center to participate in the worship experience."

"This musical and the message went far beyond a one-night emotional high. Choir members rededicated their lives and orchestra members were moved to the point where they really couldn't play."

The altar filled up, and our pastoral staff had to climb over people who were at the altar, weeping and broken."

"The Sunday night after the musical," he continued, "15 college students joined our adult choir. Our orchestra, most of whom are members of the Springfield Symphony, asked if I would lead them in a Bible study. So far, we've had five baptisms in the orchestra alone."

"There has been an outpouring of thanksgiving and love from our people. Our choir understands more and more each week the importance of being a worship-leading choir rather

than an event-based, anthem-only group.

"Experiencing God really drove that point home."

While enthusiastic responses have come from a wide range of Southern Baptist churches, Experiencing God... The Musical has reached congregations of other denominations also.

One of the more remarkable reports came from Lela Satterfield, director of worship at Fountain Valley (Calif.) United Methodist Church.

After a

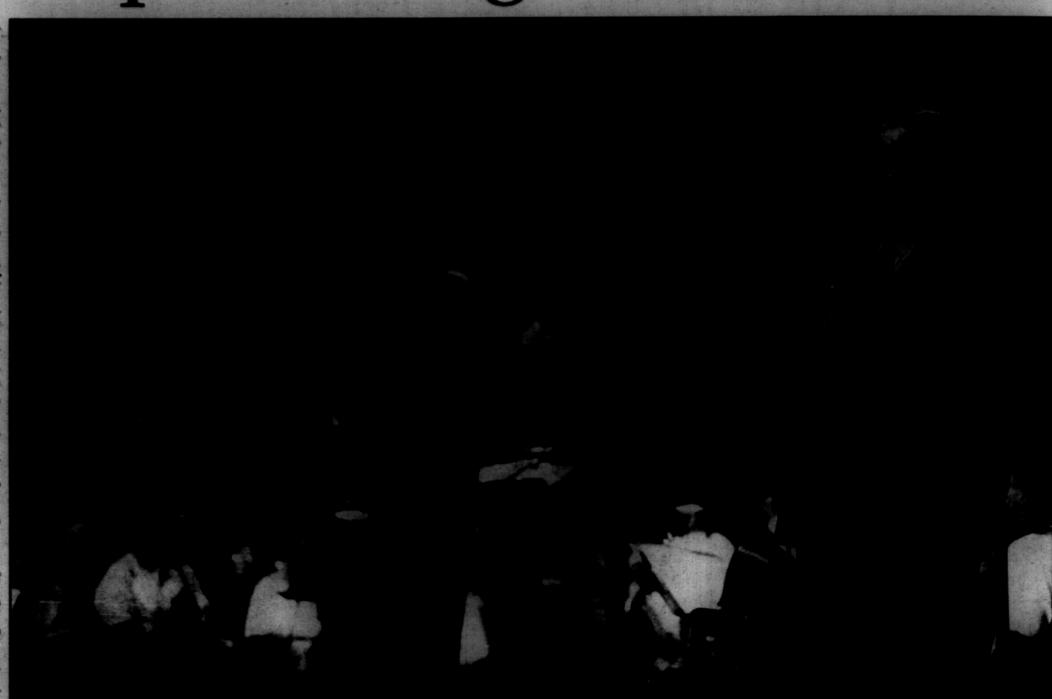
Sunday morning presentation of the musical last fall, Satterfield reported nearly 70 persons were saved, with almost as many rededications.

"So we encouraged the congregation of about 250 persons to invite others to an evening presentation March 4," she continued.

"That night the church was full, and again we had dozens of decisions. Then on Wednesday, March 7, we hosted area liturgical churches — Catholic, Episcopal, Lutheran, and Presbyterian — to a Lenten supper and presentation of Experiencing God.

"We used the Blackaby video, PowerPoint lyrics, slides, special effects, an orchestra of 16 players, and full choir and soloists — quite an undertaking for our church.

"The church was packed and more than 100 people were saved, in addition to dozens of rededications. We know that it was not the multimedia presentation or the excellence of our music that did anything," she observed.



MUSICAL MOMENTUM — Henry Blackaby (right), author of *Experiencing God*, speaks to an Oklahoma City audience during an October 2000 presentation of *Experiencing God... The Musical*, with more than 150 Southern Baptist churches from across the state represented in a 2,400-voice choir. (Photo by Kent Harville)

"It was a supernatural work of God, and we feel so blessed to be part of it."

Written by Claire Cloninger and Gary Rhodes, the 70-minute work features original songs, along with some classic hymns, praise choruses, and contemporary Christian songs made popular by contemporary artists.

Mark Blankenship, director of the music ministries department at LifeWay, said it was important

that the musical have integrity because of *Experiencing God's* biblical basis.

"*Experiencing God* is also [author, Henry Blackaby's] life message," Blankenship said. "It's the way he built his ministry in churches."

*Editor's note: Information on *Experiencing God... The Musical* is available by calling (800) GENEVOX.*

VAN SEATS FOR SALE! Four seats that fit 1994 to 1998 model 15 passenger Dodge van; \$275. Call (601) 825-0605.

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GRACE BAPTIST CHURCH, Nashville, Tenn., is seeking a full-time associate pastor/minister of education. If interested, send resume to Grace Baptist Church, 1510 Old Hickory Blvd., Nashville, TN 37207. Attention: Andre K. Dugger.

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MINISTER OF MUSIC/YOUTH. Growing church in northwest Alabama is seeking a minister of music and youth. Resumes accepted through May 31 at FBC, P.O. Box 236, Killen, AL 35645, Attn: Personnel Committee.

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BEAUTIFUL CHURCH ON TOLEDO BEND LAKE in need of full-time pastor. Send resume to Aimwell Baptist Church, Pastor Search Committee, 1892 Hwy. 1215, Zwolle, LA 71486.

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FULL-TIME MINISTER OF MUSIC AND YOUTH NEEDED. Please send resume to: Parkway Baptist Church, P.O. Box 579, Kosciusko, MS 39090; (662) 289-1222 or fax (662) 289-6116.

PART-TIME POSITION AVAILABLE: financial secretary, 20 hours per week. First Baptist Church, Ridgeland, MS. Computer experience a must, Shelby software knowledge helpful. Salary DOE. Fax resume to (601) 856-6476.

CHURCH AVERAGING 100 IN SUNDAY SCHOOL seeks full-time or bivocational associate pastor/minister of music and youth. Please send resume to Calvary Baptist Church, 2878 Old Hwy 27, Vicksburg, MS 39180 or fax (601) 636-7574.

EASTSIDE BAPTIST CHURCH, PEARL is seeking a part-time nursery worker for Sunday and Wednesday services. Please fax resume to (601) 939-2844.

CHERRY STREET BAPTIST CHURCH in Clarksdale, Miss., is seeking bivocational pastor. Please send resume to Cherry Street Baptist Church, 531 Cherry Street, Clarksdale, MS 38614.

PART-TIME MUSIC DIRECTOR, Harrison County. Send resumes to: Search Committee, Robinwood Baptist Church, P.O. Box 580, Saucier, MS 39574.

PART-TIME DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S MINISTRY position available at Hillcrest Baptist Church, Jackson, Miss. Contact Victor Dorman at (601) 857-4113 or (601) 878-5905.

POSITION AVAILABLE - full-time minister of music and youth. Housing available. Thirty minutes away from Memphis. Send resume to Slayden Baptist Church, 2534 Highway 72, Lamar, MS 38642 or call (662) 252-4559 or (662) 252-4520; fax (662) 252-5248; e-mail sbchurch@dixie-net.com.

HOLD FORTH WORD

Editor:

I read with intense interest your (April 5) guest opinion by Franklin Lay concerning the lack of Bible reading in our public worship services. I do agree with Lay. No wonder we're in trouble!

The main thing the preacher is called of God to do is hold forth the Word (2 Tim. 2:15). His waking hours should be full of study, meditation, prayer, and preparation to preach from the Bible when opportunity comes. Shame, shame that so many of our churches have preachers given to things and projects others should be doing — deacons, stewards, elders, etc.

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commercialsales@transportationsouth.com

Newhebron (Lawrence): May 20-25; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 6 p.m.; Mon.-Fri., 7 p.m.; Michael Gott, Jacksonville, Tex., evangelist;

Folk today deal with all kinds of life-problems, conflicts, etc., but none of them could not be dealt with more adequately except in the light of the Word of God. I want to encourage young preachers with the same words Paul gave Timothy. Even when it does not seem right, "Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all long suffering and doctrine" (2 Tim. 4:2). God honors

his Word, both in public readings and preaching.

Chester Estes, Jr.
Union

GOOD WORK APPRECIATED

Editor:

I appreciate the article about Make A Difference Day in the metro Jackson area (May 10 issue). One thing that made this event special was that those who participated were "twenty-something" singles. It is exciting to know that the young singles in our state are interested in helping those in need.

Also, Ridgecrest Church in Madison needs to be added to the churches mentioned in the article that played an important role in making this first-time event a success.

I would like to say thanks again to everyone who was involved for all their good work.

Glenn Shows, consultant
Disc. & Family Ministry
MBCB, Jackson



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Unsigned letters will not be printed. No multi-copy or form letters will be used.

Each correspondent must include an address and telephone number for verification. In special instances, name may be withheld at writer's request and editor's discretion.

Please include the name of cooperating Mississippi Baptist church where correspondent is a member. (Mississippi Baptists' letters will receive priority when space is limited.)

Letters must be limited to 250 words. All correspondence is subject to editing.

Correspondents should refrain from personal attacks. The opinions expressed in letters to the editor do not necessarily reflect the views of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.

No more than one letter from any individual will be printed during a three-month period.

When in the judgement of the editor a given issue has received sufficient attention, correspondence dealing with it will no longer be published and a notice will be printed to that effect.

Adopt an Annuitant Sunday — June 24, 2001

Thousands of aged ministers and their widows face critical choices today regarding food, housing, prescription drugs and medical care. In years past, they served small churches on meager salaries — often with little or no retirement contribution.

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FAMILY BIBLE STUDY

Experiencing eternal life

John 11:25-26

By Lori Clendinning

Psychologists use word association games to help trigger subconscious responses. For the word "cat," does "dog" come to mind? Does "stop" provoke the word "go?" What response does "eternal life" prompt?

Oftentimes, eternal life is thought of with regard to the hereafter, that is, Heaven or Hell. Certainly, that is the main issue for the new believer, but to the maturing Christian, eternal life also includes earthly life.

When we, confessing our sin and acknowledging our need of forgiveness, invite Jesus to be Savior and Lord, he immediately enters our hearts and lives. With Jesus living within us, we are changed. We are forever his, entitled to eternal life because of the great gift he bestows upon us.

Moreover, Jesus imparts

eternal life to believers so that he can empower us as we live out our physical life here on earth. Under our own power, the Christian life is humanly impossible. Only Christ can live the human life perfectly and wholly.

The Christian life is not about our trying to imitate Christ as much as it is about Jesus imparting his life to and living his life through us. The Christ-controlled life is Christ-centered. It is empowered by the Holy Spirit, enabling us to introduce others to Jesus. A life fueled by Christ results in an effective prayer life and the ability to understand God's Word.

Although we may not always be conscious of it, by immersing ourselves in God's Word, Jesus begins to transform us. Through the Holy Spirit's



Clendinning

indwelling, Jesus can express himself through our emotions and speak through our words. Our actions become his actions; our thoughts become his thoughts. Christ in us changes us.

To the secular mind, this present physical life is all there is; nothing exists beyond mortal life.

Often, people's lives revolve around obtaining material and corporal pleasures: wealth, sex, power, prestige. All these provide momentary happiness, but beyond the grave, these souls have no assurance of an eternal life with Christ.

For the Christian, Jesus is the assurance of eternal life. Not only does he offer new life to those of us who repent of our sins and place our faith in him, but he gives us true life now and never-ending life with him beyond physical death. Because of this resurrection power, believers have hope and eternal life in the present and will experience eternal life in the future.

This week's lesson in the

eleventh chapter of John focuses on Jesus' resurrection power when he raised Lazarus from the dead. The experience helped many Jews discover that Jesus fulfilled Messianic prophecies and is, indeed, the Son of God.

To those who placed their faith and trust in him, Jesus gave the assurance of eternal life with him:

- Lazarus, the beloved friend of Jesus, whose death precipitated the resurrection miracle. His physical, Christ-focused life, although restored, was not out of danger from the Sanhedrin who later plotted to kill him (John 12:10).

- Martha, Lazarus' oldest sister, whose courageous profession of faith in Jesus as the Christ, the Son of God (John 11:27), is equally important as that of Peter's confession of Jesus as the Messiah (Matt. 16:16).

- Mary, the other sister of Lazarus, whose depth of grief and sorrow moved Jesus to tears. She believed that Jesus had the power to change the course of life. Although she may not have foreseen that

Jesus would choose to raise her brother from the dead, she knew that, had he been there, her "brother would not have died" (John 11:32).

The disciples' faith was greatly strengthened by witnessing this resurrection power, and many Jews, who were present to comfort the sisters, put their faith in Jesus, too (John 11:45).

However, for those who refused to believe in Jesus as Messiah, their fate regarding eternal life was sealed. Despite the miraculous sign shown to them, many Jews, including those within the Sanhedrin, further hardened their hearts and began to openly plot against Jesus (John 11:53).

By raising Lazarus from the dead, Jesus declared himself the Author of resurrection and life (John 11:25). Then, as now, each person's destiny depends on response to this revelation.

One more word association: "Belief in Jesus."

Yes or no?

Clendinning is a former newspaper editor and a member of Park Place Church, Pearl.

EXPLORE THE BIBLE

Vengeance

1 Samuel 25:1-44

By Jim Burnett

Our society today is plagued with a malady called rage. Many people seem to have absolutely no control of their emotions. Consequently, when these individuals are mistreated or perceive they have been unfairly handled, they go ballistic and inflict harm on others.

These occurrences are becoming more and more frequent. From the numerous school shootings, to the bombing of the government building in Oklahoma City, to road rage, to air rage, retaliation against one's enemy has become a national sport in America.

The lesson today challenges us to carefully consider our response to hurtful words and actions leveled against us. It teaches us the importance of



Burnett

listening to God and obeying his Spirit when we are wronged or unjustly treated. Furthermore, the lesson encourages us to say no to the temptation to retaliate against our offenders as David did concerning Nabal.

Vengeful intention (25:21-22). Nabal had wronged David and his men by cheating them out of compensation for protecting his flocks. David was incensed and told his men to prepare for battle. His plan was to kill all of Nabal's sons, thus obliterating any trace of this evil man's existence.

God intervened, however, through Abigail, a godly, discerning woman who happened to be Nabal's wife. She begged David to reconsider revenge against her husband. God used

this woman to help David understand vengeance was not the answer and shedding blood out of anger was not God's will.

Have you ever been wronged by someone and tempted to retaliate? All of us have, but when we act on our

anger and our hurt we do not accomplish the righteousness of God, and often we put ourselves on the same level with our offender.

Gracious intercession (25:23, 26-31). Abigail's humility and godly discernment completely stopped David in his tracks. How could he ignore her gifts, her humble pleadings, and her words of wisdom? The Lord intercepted David and his army that day through Abigail. He kept him from doing something he would have regretted for years to come.

Often it amazes me to see how God steps into my life and positions a wise and godly person in my path to

help me get a new perspective on my situation. Many times I have been kept from making huge mistakes because God interceded. Let me encourage you to look and listen for God's intervention in your life, especially when you are tempted to avenge someone who has hurt you.

Wise response (25:32-35). Two of the most difficult feats for human beings are to overcome hurt and refrain from getting even with someone who has inflicted pain. In fact, without God's help it is almost impossible to restrain ourselves.

After David's encounter with Abigail, he knew she was a divine messenger. He wisely resisted murdering Nabal and his sons. David left vengeance to the Lord and ten days later Nabal was dead.

We too must allow God to control our emotions and leave room for him to administer his justice. The Bible is full of references to God's vengeance.

In the book of Romans, Paul encourages us to never

exchange evil for evil but leave room for God's wrath. After all, God is the only perfect judge and the only one qualified to delve out justice. Peter echoes this by saying, do not repay evil with evil (1 Peter 3:9).

Divine retribution will take place at the Second Coming of Jesus. The Bible refers to this numerous times as the Day of Vengeance. God will pull out his scales of justice and weigh mankind. The devil, his demons, and his children will be punished.

Until then, however, you and I must be patient when wronged. We must resist the temptation to yield to our flesh and lash out at those who have mistreated us. We must, as Scripture says, be wise as serpents and gentle as doves. Therefore, God's people must leave personal vengeance to the Lord. We can do this only when we submit our lives daily to the lordship of Jesus Christ.

Burnett is pastor of Raymond Road Church, Jackson.

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Articles that are not date-sensitive will
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THE VILLAGE VIEW



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Gifts of Honor and Memory

A portion of The Village View is allocated each month to a list of Gifts of Honor and Memory. Many groups and individuals elect to pay tribute to others through this sensitive, meaningful, and helpful medium. This feature is hopefully designed to further honor, with taste and respect, those who are and have been special to our special friends.

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The Baptist Children's Village recently hosted an Open House at the new Chaplain's residence on The India Nunnery Campus. Pictured are Michael Mote, current chaplain; Henry Glaze, executive assistant, programs; Bob Pyron, contractor, Ole South Design; Charles Renfrow, board member.

Seminarian keeping football dream alive

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP) — Patrick Goodman's mission field is 50 yards long with padded walls and fake grass.

"That's the real reason why I'm playing," said Goodman, a master of divinity student from Elizabethtown, Ky., who began school last fall.

Referring to his "Astroturf mission field," he maintains the football world of AF2 has fields ripe for Gospel harvest. Though some of his teammates and opponents are Christians, most are not.

"I'm definitely not preaching to the choir," Goodman said of the atmosphere of AF2.

The Fire debuted as an AF2 team in April. As Goodman has interacted with his fellow players, he has begun to see the many opportunities for Christian

witness in the league. "So when I'm on the road trip to Wichita, and I'm studying Greek at midnight, they'll ask, 'What do you do?'" Goodman recounted.

"There's my opportunity to share. ...I get about a five- to six-minute window where I'm able to share what's going on in my studies and also what's going on in my personal life."

In a world where locker room talk and temptations could corrupt, Goodman just tries to be a light for the Fire.

"I like to try and build trust with these guys and show that my faith and what I'm hoping to do is genuine," Goodman said.

A year ago, though, Goodman thought his football career had flamed out. After four years as the center for Western Kentucky University's team, Goodman had dreams of playing in the National Football League (NFL).

Then came NFL draft day. For college football players, it is the biggest event of the year. For Goodman, it was a day of disappointment. He had sent out tapes and letters to every NFL team, all to no avail. He was not selected.

"I was kind of bummed to be honest," Goodman said. "Up until the NFL draft, I thought that's what my ministry calling would be — to go and be a Christian light in the NFL."

"Once the draft passed, I said, 'Football is done. That part of my life is done.' I had a wonderful time. I didn't have any huge regrets. ...I'd really almost given up on playing ever again."

God had other plans. Since Goodman's senior year at Western Kentucky, God had begun placing a call in Goodman for full-time ministry.

"Our pastor at the time made mention that maybe I should look into going to seminary because I was reading every book on his shelf," Goodman said.

Last fall, he and his wife

Janet responded to that call by moving to Louisville. Last December, Goodman's sister informed him of the tryouts for the expansion Fire.

Louisville had just formed as one of 28 AF2 teams. The league itself only began in March 2000 as a minor-league affiliate of the Arena Football League.

Though Goodman was taking classes and working 35 hours a week, the opportunity to protect quarterbacks again was too good to pass up.

"I thought football was done, and then this happens," Goodman said.

He impressed the coaches and made the team. Goodman starts on offense, defense, and special teams.

"It is a huge test trying to juggle work and school and football at the same time," Goodman said.

Does he still dream of playing at a higher level?

"It would be nice, but I would have to give up seminary," Goodman said.

"I would have to give up what I'm getting now and the discipleship I'm getting now," he pointed out.

Goodman and his wife are considering career missions in the Middle East.

"I think football really is a good preparation for being on a mission field where there aren't a lot of believers," Goodman said, describing both as "where the rubber meets the road" kinds of ministries.

STILL PLAYING — Southern Seminary student Patrick Goodman plays pro football for the Louisville Fire, an Arena Football2 team. The former Western Kentucky University standout began studies last fall at the seminary. (Photo by Michael Foust)

Goodman, a 6-foot-2, 285-pound Southern Seminary student, plays football for the Louisville Fire in the professional Arena Football2 League (AF2) — an indoor league known for its fast-paced, eight-on-eight, offense-oriented pigskin pandemonium.

For Goodman, tackling and blocking for the Fire is more than just a chance to compete in a game he loves. Goodman has returned to the gridiron after almost giving it up principally to glorify the God he loves.

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Southern Seminary student Patrick Goodman plays pro football for the Louisville Fire, an Arena Football2 team. The former Western Kentucky University standout began studies last fall at the seminary. (Photo by Michael Foust)

Coach: real miracle didn't happen in Music City

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) — Tennessee Titans Special Teams Coach Alan Lowry said he gets goose bumps every time he sees a replay of the "Music City Miracle."

However, Lowry said the play, which led to a Titans victory in the final 16 seconds of a January 2000 AFC Wild Card Playoff game against the Buffalo Bills, was the result of perseverance, preparedness, and practice — not a miracle.

"The play has given me more opportunity just like this to tell people about the real miracle in my life, and that's the miracle of what Jesus Christ has done for me."

He spoke to more than 100 LifeWay Christian Store managers and managers-in-training attending annual meetings in Nashville May 6-10.

Lowry, who grew up in a Christian home, said while playing college football at the University of Texas, he thought he had "everything under control."

He played quarterback and defensive back for his team, earned All-Southwest Conference honors, and was drafted to play in the National Football League (NFL).

"Then within a five-year span, I lost my father to a blood clot, I lost my chances to play for the NFL to injury, and I lost my mother to leukemia," Lowry said. "I realized I didn't have anything under control."

As his mother lay dying, Lowry said she told him he needed to turn control of his life over to God and live his faith every day.

"That's what I did. Doing this is the only thing that can help you avoid the pitfalls and guilt. I take my faith into every aspect of my life, especially coaching."

Like coaching a successful football team, turning out high-performance employees takes more than a miracle, Lowry said.

Four keys to a high performance team, he said, are:

- Communication. "Communication has to be from the top to the bottom and the bottom to the top. The truth has to be

told and those communicating must be trustworthy."

- Contribution. "Everyone has a role and must be responsible and accountable in that role no matter what the circumstances."

- Chemistry. "This is the hardest ingredient to find, and it's the hardest to build into a team."

Not everyone has to like each other, Lowry said, but they do have to respect each other.

"I tell my players to A.S.K. themselves how they should come to work everyday."

"A' stands for attitude, 'S' stands for skills, and 'K' stands for knowledge."

- Commitment. "We have to set goals, and everyone has to work just as hard as the next one to reach those goals."

With these four elements — communication, contribution, chemistry, and commitment — teams and employees who work together have a better chance at achieving success, Lowry said.

"What is success?" he asked. "True success is not something achieved, but something pursued, a series of accomplishments that make your future better than your past. Success is a process; success is leadership."

Lowry said he believes leadership is influence, and leaders can be negative as well as positive.

Lowry said positive leaders must work toward raising up other positive leaders, "because there is never a shortage of negative leaders."

"First, we must look at ourselves and determine what type of leader we are," he added. "We must lead ourselves well first."

Bibliocipher

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DRIU WLK C YLEERWXUX
KDUU? SU GKHLWZ RWX
LV R ZLLX YLJHRZU; SU
WLK RVHRCX, WUCKDUH
SU KDLJ XCCGERBUX; VLH
KDU ALHX KDB ZLX CG
MCKD KDUU MDCK-
DUHGLUIUH KDLJ
ZLUCK.

FLGDJR LWU: WCWU

Clue: D = H

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: Exodus Twenty-Two: Twenty.